

Project Summary and Resource Determination Form – 20190221 Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest

1.0 Project Information

Responsible Official has approved Project Proposal: Y		Comment Due Date: 12/31/2019
Project Title: Gilbert Creek Beaver Dam Analogues		
Project Lead/Manager: Christina Hacker and Paul Chase		
Applicant/Proponent (if applicable): NA		
District(s) (Select all that apply): Evanston-Mountain View RD		
General Location: Gilbert Creek 10 miles south of Robertson, WY on the Mountain View RD		
Elevation Range (feet): 9,000		
Legal Land Description: T12N, R115W, Sections 5, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20, 29, and 30		
County(s) (Select all that apply): Uinta County Wyoming		
Project Map Included: Y		GIS Shapefiles Included: Y
Amount of new disturbance (acres): 651 ac, ~10 stream miles		
Amount of previous disturbance (acres): 0		
Amount of TOTAL disturbance (acres): 651 ac, ~10 stream miles		
Duration of Project: June 2020-November 2025		
Management Prescription(s) (Select all that apply): 3.1a, 6.1		
Type of NEPA (Select One): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CE <input type="checkbox"/> EA <input type="checkbox"/> EIS		
If CE, list Category (select all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 36 CFR 220.6(e)(7)		

2.0 Project Summary

Purpose and Need:

Nuisance beavers clog up culverts, create flooding problems, and road maintenance issues. Forest Service roads supply the transportation system needed for recreation, timber harvest, range management, and fire protection. In the right place, beavers provide a benefit to the ecosystem e.g. (1) create and maintain habitat for many other fish and wildlife; (2) increase watershed health by filtering out sediments and toxins and counteract the effects of channel downcutting; (3) create ponds and a network of riparian areas needed for livestock; (4) increase recreational opportunities for fishermen, and (5) counteract the effects of drought by storing water for longer periods during the summer and slowly releasing water into the system. Wyoming Game and Fish (WGF) is proposing installation of Beaver Dam Analogues (BDAs) and beaver translocation to the Gilbert Creek and its tributaries between Slab Park and the Utah State line. This area is excellent habitat where beavers were previously more abundant. Beaver dams in this area were once present but historically removed during a rotenone treatment in 2001 to allow for the treatment to be successful. The beaver population has been low since that time. This project is to restore the Gilbert Creek beaver population.

Proposed Action:

This project has two objectives: (1) install Beaver Dam Analogues (BDAs) and (2) trap and translocate nuisance beavers to Gilbert Creek of the Mountain View Ranger District. BDAs will be installed at multiple locations along Gilbert Creek and its tributaries between Slab Park and the Utah State line. BDAs are man-made beaver dams created by driving six to eight foot wooden posts into the streambed with a hydraulic post pounder. BDA installation will be a collaborative effort between WGF and Forest Service. Posts will likely come from damaged lodgepole pines along Gilbert Creek Road. If this is not possible, posts will be purchased. The posts are generally driven into the streambed one to two feet apart and run perpendicular to the stream corridor from the high bank marks. Willow branches from onsite are woven between the posts and mud from onsite is packed into structure to hold it together. The structure creates small ponds within the floodplain usually less than an a half acre each. The goal is to install 6-12 BDAs per year. The project area is completely on Forest Service land, but several private land parcels are about ¾ mile downstream from the project area. BDAs and beaver dams naturally store water year round, release water slowly over time, and may create benefits during late summer when water is more limited.

Translocated beavers will likely use the BDA and make it a beaver friendly habitat. Beavers will be translocated after BDAs are built in late summer and/or early fall of each year. WGF will trap and translocate beavers to the project area. Beavers may be trapped on Federal or private land in Wyoming.

BDA installation and beaver translocation is proposed to begin summer or fall 2020.

Forest Service and/or Wyoming Game and Fish will obtain a stream alteration permit from the State of Wyoming.

Required Design Criteria as per Resource Determinations: [NEPA Coordinator: Where responsible official chooses to sign form for CEs not requiring documentation, summarize specialists' design criteria here. Otherwise leave blank]

Gilbert Creek Beaver Dam Analogues

